

Regular Fund

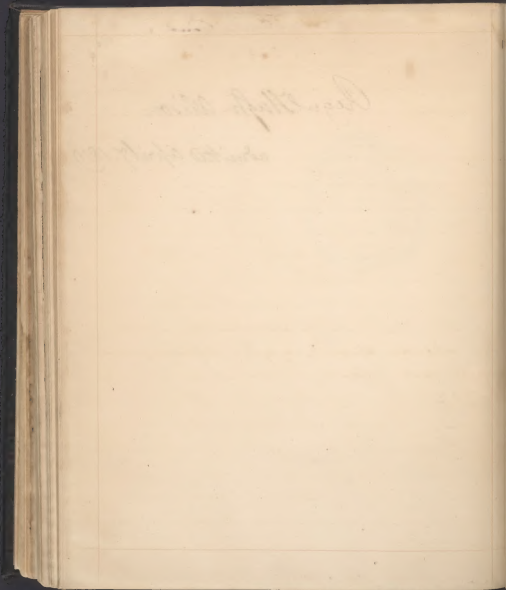
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Regular Gout

The opportunities which the medical student enjoys of obtaining practical information on the disease which I have chosen as the subject of this dissertation; and the consequent difficulty of presenting to experienced practitioners, any improvement in the history, pathology, or treatment, so very great, that in offering this for your inspection I must rely on your generosity for

those indulgences which are due to youth and inexperience.

In the catalogue of diseases to which the votaries of high life are peculiarly liable; there is none of more frequent occurrence or more distressing in its effects than Gout; it debars the unhappy victim the enjoyment of those pleasures which appear to constitute the sole object of his existence and leaves him a prey to the ravages of a disease induced by his own or a parents excesses.

All writers on this subject have concurred in the opinion that this disease is hereditary except Dr Brown who ridicules the idea: he says, a taint transmitted from father to son and celebrated under the title of hereditary, is a mere tale, that the rich mans son inherits the disease with the estate; and that those who

are excluded from the estate escape the disease; but we have too many instances of the extensive influence of Gout in some families continuing through several generations to credit Dr B's assertion or even admit a doubt of the fact.

Hereditary predisposition consists in the propagation of a similar temperament from father to son rendering him a fit subject for the disease and requiring less force in the exciting causes to induce it; it does not however follow that the son of a gouty parent must be affected; he may evade the disease by avoiding the exciting causes.

Dr Rush says this predisposition frequently passes by one generation and appears in the next, but because the disease did not make its appearance in the intermediate generation; are we to

conclude that no predisposition existed can we for a moment suppose that a child can inherit a disease from a parent who was not diseased, if the parent was free from all predisposition and propagated a similar temperament to his son it follows of course that the son must be equally as free from all hereditary predisposition as the father. If we break the link which connects the grandfather and grandchild in the Father, we destroy all connection between them, and under absolutely impossible for the grandchild to be hereditarily diseased.

That gout and Scrophula sometimes pass by one generation and appear in the next is a fact well ascertained, where this circumstance occurs I think it can be better accounted for, by supposing that the predisposition exists but that the exciting causes are wanting to produce the disease,

that the predisposition remains dormant in the system untill called into action by the exciting causes.

It not unfrequently happens that one child of a gouty parent is affected while the other is not in this case we have every reason to believe them both predisposed being born of the same parents and subject to the same hereditary affections yet we see the one enjoying the blessing of undisturbed health while the other is writhing with anguish under the curse of hereditary disease, these cases are very analogous and may both be attributed to the absence of exciting causes: it also appears to me that this predisposition is so modified by different constitutions as to require exciting causes adapted to constitutional peculiarities to produce the disease.

It has long been a generally received opinion that the male sex was more liable to this disease than the female, Dr Rush says he once believed and taught the same but that he was convinced that it occurred most frequently in females though from the thin covering which they wear on their feet it seldom appears in those parts; Dr Caldwell appears to be of the same opinion in his notes to Cullen's first time he observes what would be regular Podagra in men is Historias, sick Head ache Colic or some anomalous complaint in women; Had regular Podagra never appeared in women we might suppose the female constitution susceptible of the disease in those forms but since it has I do not think we are warranted in turning every disease Gout which originates in or is connected with the stomach besides the analogy between the two is not very strong considerable difference exists

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ting between them for although they may have
the same causes the one is the result of
the action of these causes continued for years
Whereas the others are merely transient affec-
tions. Hysteria is most frequently the result
of some violent passion or emotion. Gout is
a regularly established diseased action in
the system appearing in regular paroxysms
late in life and increasing with age, attack-
ing persons of robust constitutions and cor-
pulent habits, on the other hand Hysteria
appears early in life decreasing as age in-
creases and attacking women of delicate con-
stitutions endowed with extreme sensibility.
Custom and necessity prohibit women and
the poor those indulgences in eating and
drinking which prove the most frequent
causes of the disease.

All those causes of disease which act either
directly or indirectly on the stomach may

be considered as remote causes of Gout such as intemperance gluttony sedentary habits indolence indigestion &c.

A paroxysm of Gout is most frequently preceded by some evolutions flatulencies indigestion depraved appetite nausea strong sensation of internal heat obstinate constipation or looseness of the bowels, these symptoms occur several days and sometimes a week previous to the paroxysm.

The paroxysm consists in an inflammatory affection of one of the joints most frequently the great toe attended with pain so violent as to be compared by Dr. Rush to the gnawing of a dog.

The local symptoms which precede it are unusual coldness of the feet and legs numbness and sense of prickling in the lower extremities, cramps in the muscles of the leg.

The paroxysms generally come on in the spring of the year early or late according to the vicissitudes of the weather and the exposure of the patient. It commences with pain in the joint attended with cold shivering which ceases as the pain increases and is succeeded by a hot stage of pyrexia which continues as long as the pain going through all the stages of a regular paroxysm of intermittent fever and finally terminates in a gentle sweat leaving the joint red and considerably swollen. After an attack of this kind the patient is liable to slight attacks every evening for several days diminishing in violence until the disease gradually disappears leaving the patient in better health than he had previously enjoyed. In the commencement of the disease the paroxysms do not return oftener than

once in two or three years but as the disease progresses they become annual semiannual & each succeeding paroxysm increasing in length until at last the paroxysms are so long and the intervals so short that the patient scarcely enjoys a moment's intermission.

At first one foot only is affected then every second day both feet one after the other and as the disease continued to increase both feet at once. At some times agents the larger joints of the upper and lower extremities. At first the use of the joint is easily recovered after the paroxysm but it becomes more difficult in proportion to the frequency of the returns until their motion is entirely lost. Chalky concretions are sometimes found on the outside of the joints. By chemical analysis these concretions are found

is so similar to the one in the
 10. The similarity between Gout and Lithia-
 sis is not confined to the circumstance
 since they also originate from the same
 cause and depend upon a common state
 of the alimentary canal. The knowledge
 of this analogy does not appear to have in-
 fluenced the practice or to have thrown
 much light on the pathology of either disease.
 Such is the history of this case given
 by DeLion and other writers and we can
 not but regret that their knowledge did not
 extend to the pathology of the disease with
 the same degree of connection.

From the earliest ages of medi-
 cine attempts have been made to invest
 the remote cause of this disease. The
 theories on this subject have been nume-
 rous but whether from the revolutions in
 medicine or their own patients some have

withstand the test of time and this part
of the subject is still enveloped by the
clouds of ignorance.

I shall mention a few of these theories
and the objections to them.

One of the most ancient opinions was
that of a fluid depended upon a certain mor-
bid matter always present in the sys-
tem or certain causes was known upon
the mind was induced the disease.
The first objection which presents itself to
this theory is that if this morbid mat-
ter is always present in the body it must
exist in the healthy state and the exis-
tence of morbid matter in a healthy state
of the system is inconsistent with the
animal economy, besides we have no know-
ledge of its existence and the opinions of its
nature are so various as to render its
existence doubtful even if we had no

other reason.

The next is that a peculiar saline acrimony in the blood existing in such proportion as to irritate and excite a morbid action in the lumenations of the arteries in certain parts of the body to be the proximate cause of Gout. This saline acrimony has never been detected in the blood we are not therefore obliged to believe in its existence; and if it did exist its action would not be partial, confined to one part, but general and extensive as the surface upon which it acts not attacking the most insensible parts of the body but rather confining its action to parts most sensible.

Dr Saurin considers the proximate cause to be irritability or defective irritation of some part of the system, producing torpor and inflammation he also thinks

its most frequent primary seat to be the liver and the affection of the other parts of the system to be sympathies or associated and accounts for the morbid affection of the stomach previous to a paroxysm by the termination of the biliary duct in the duodenum.

Among the many objections which may be made to this theory it will be sufficient to observe that the symptoms of indigestion and other phenomena of the disease can be accounted much easier and without resorting to retrograde motion. Both this I shall demand Dr Darwin they and proceed to make a few observations on that of Dr Cullen, he says in some persons there is a certain vigorous and plethoric state of the system which at a certain period of life is liable to a loss of tone in the extremities, this is in some in-

are communicated to the whole system
but more especially to the stomach &c.
this occurs while the energy of the brain
still retains its vigour the vis medicatrix
nature is excited to restore the tone of
the parts by exciting an inflammatory af-
fection in some part of the extremities
when this has subsisted for some days the
tone of the extremities and of the whole
system is restored and the patient returns
to his ordinary state of health.

This theory is altogether vague and un-
intelligible. In this point Linnaeus has commen-
ced with an unsupported assertion which
is not destined to be understood, in the
second he evidently mistakes the cause
for the effect when he makes the sto-
mach the secondary seat of the disease
and the loss of tone in the extremities
the cause of its morbid affection, and

lastly he does not explain in what manner an inflammation of the gut for instance, leads to the extremities and health to the whole system.

There are many other theories but I do not think it necessary to mention them.

First in the early stage is evidently seated in the stomach and the medium of that organ it becomes a disease of the whole system.

By what means it is thrown upon the extremities it is impossible for us in the present state of medicine to ascertain, and I do not know whether the knowledge would be of any great practical importance for if we consider the disease as originating and existing in a disordered state of the stomach the indications of treatment are sufficiently clear, and could not be influenced by unknown

ledge which circumstance alone could un-
der the investigation important or inter-
esting.

To be convinced that gout in males
and is seated in the stomach, it appears
to me only necessary to reflect on the
causes, symptoms, and cure of the dis-
ease, and those particularly, which have
induced me to adopt this opinion. I will
endeavour to state clearly and concisely,

1st The exciting causes of gout, act
either directly, or indirectly, on the stomach.
the majority of them directly, the rest in-
directly, consequently the first diseased im-
pression is made upon that organ.

2nd The disease does not make its appear-
ance until a late period of life, when
the exciting causes, have sufficient time
to act in destroying the tone of the sto-
mach. In high seasoned food and wine.

of the luxurious daily exertions on the stomach for preternatural efforts in digesting its contents impairs its powers gradually undermines it, and the patient finally sinks a victim to glut, to excess, and intemperance.

3^d The symptoms of indigestion which most frequently precede a paroxysm of gout clearly indicate a disordered and debased state of the alimentary canal. 4th Paroxysms of gout are sometimes arrested in their career by violent passions or emotions of the mind; there is no part of the human body which has so intimate a connection with the mind as the stomach; so great is the sympathy existing between them, that in affecting the one, we necessarily affect the other, this is sufficiently evinced in all the diseases of the stomach.

and elementary Causes, particularly in
 Dyspepsia, Hypochondriasis &c. and the
 influence of the mind on the stomach
 by the very idea of an emetic creating
 nausea, and in some persons even vomit-
 ing. The manner in which the passions
 act in removing a paroxysm of faint
 I suppose to be as follows, a violent out-
 burst of rage or anger acting on the stomach th-
 the medium of the mind stimulates it
 to an action which being greater than
 the diseased action overpowers it and
 removes the disease.

If we do not admit that heat is ex-
 ists in the stomach, in what manner
 can we account for its removal by the
 above causes, or what effect can a pas-
 sion of the mind have on a disease
 seated in the extremities.

Lastly, on all those cases when cured by

disease have been performed they were
affected by such measures as are pecu-
liarly calculated to restore health
and tone to the stomach.

Having rendered it
highly probable that the stomach is
the primary seat of the disease I shall
next make a few remarks on the most
probable means of effecting a permanent
cure.

The impracticability of effect-
ing a radical cure in joint, appears
to depend less upon the inevitable na-
ture of the disease, than upon the un-
willingness of those afflicted with
it to submit to a proper regimen.

Occurring most frequently in men ac-
customed to high living, and the un-
limited indulgence in wine, and spi-

noxious liquors, and to whom it has rendered these indulgences, almost necessary to existence, they are, in consequence, all the pains, and all the inconvenience of the disease, to the enjoyment of those delightful pleasures; even a quack himself who well knows the efficacy and absolute necessity of abstinence from pernicious liquors in the cure of this disease has not sufficient resolution to follow his own prescription and felt a victim to the disease under such circumstances the physician can only palliate a malady which is incurable; it is beyond the powers of medicine to remove a disease without then removing the cause.

It was, under the circumstances existed the efforts of regular physicians, at some the object of Companies who agents of emphysemas have endeavored

innumerable nostrums which have alternately been celebrated as specifics in the cure of gonorrhoea. By removing any remedy which held out the slightest prospect of advantage to the privation of long accustomed luxuries, the patient is almost bound to resort to a similar remedy in some one and under many the constitution is so weakened of itself to remove the disease by the attendance on the use of the vulgar catalogue of proposed remedies.

Not the least celebrated of these are the Portuguese powder and the Eau medicinale. The first of these is almost obsolete on account of the injury sustained by the constitution from its uses the last has maintained an undiminished reputation ever since its invention; its efficacy is probably owing to its purgative property as Dr Chapman states that the most benign

cial results immediately given when using
in this decade.

Among other remedies which are
incapable to relieve the fever, Dr. C. M.
Horne has tried, in several cases, a new
one. He states that a venous infusion of
the cold-brown antimony is more safe than
most of the other, in my, in some the
most violent cases; and that he relieved
himself from a violent attack, in 1848, after
nearly four hours, by injecting into the ve-
nulations, six or eight of this medicine. He will
not attempt to dictate the practice of the
practice of it, but a medical man in a
country where he is investing in the medical
profession, and medicine as that would end
to be used, must be concerned in the
most. C. M. H.

But there are matters which only the
State H. Board or where the fever is, they

make no longer necessary its permanent
use that it to be effective not so much
by medicines as by a more regulated diet
and course of life.

The first step towards this im-
provement must be the removal of the
exciting cause the patient must therefore
abstract most strictly from the use of all
warm, spirituous liquors and every excess in
eating.

Considering the disease as dependent
upon a debilitated and exhausted state of the
Stomach, and alimentary canal, the next
step, must be to restore health, and strength,
to the digestive organs, by proportioning the
quantity, and quality, of food, to the pow-
ers of these organs, and by the administra-
tion of some medicines.

Exercise as absolutely neces-
sary to the health of the stomach should

not be neglected. Labour and a more rest
without the use of medicine, are frequently
effected cures of this disease.

As the patient has been
sent for to the residence of the physician
adhere to those general rules as has been
forward to a complete restoration of his
health, if not he must inevitably succumb
under the repeated attacks of a transient
and distressing disease.

